

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for sending temporally displaced electronic messages over a network, comprising:
  - 5 (a) a sending system capable of accessing a network and configured to encode a temporal specifier into an electronic message to be sent over said network to a recipient at a destination address on the network; and
  - (b) a retention system connected on said network, configured to decode the temporal specifier of said electronic message, store said electronic message, and send said electronic message to the destination in accord with the specified temporal specifier.
2. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the sending system comprises a first computer capable of executing programmed instructions.
3. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the retention system comprises a second computer connected to a network and capable of executing programmed instructions.
- 20 4. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the internet service provider (ISP) for the sending system comprises the retention system such that electronic messages sent from the sending system must pass through the retention system associated with

the ISP.

5. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the internet service provider (ISP) for the recipient at the destination address comprises the retention system such that electronic messages sent from the sending system must first pass through the retention system associated with the ISP of the destination address prior to arrival at the destination.

6. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the sending system further encodes the network address of the retention system into the electronic message, such that the electronic message containing the encoded temporal specifier is first sent to said retention system prior to said retention system sending the electronic message to the recipient at the destination at a time according to the temporal specifier.

7. A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the retention system is capable of adding content to the electronic message.

8. A system as recited in claim 7, wherein the content added by the retention system is selected from sources of content consisting of text, multimedia, graphics, sounds, files, and file pointers.



12. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the retention system comprises a mail server provided by the internet service provider of the sender.

13. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the retention system comprises a mail server provided by the internet service provider of the recipient at the destination address.

14. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the user specified delivery time coordinate is configured to be equated to a particular day.

15. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the user specified delivery time coordinate is configured to be equated to a particular day and time.

16. A method as recited in claim 11, wherein the retention system provides editing and deletion capability on the retained electronic messages to the sender of the electronic messages.